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## Blood Merchants

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## صم (Blood Merchants)

Farouk Goweda

translated by Andy Fogle & Walid Abdallah

*Original Arabic:*

ي ناوغل رودص قوف نوماني  
ديلول دهع رعشلاب نوكببيو  
رمع ءالشأ عجاضملا تحتو  
دي هشي ركذو م نازحأو  
ءامد اياقب يكبت سأكلا يفو  
ديغ سافنأو رطع ضاقنأو  
راغصل سوؤرقوف نوقليو  
دي بعل زبخو ي ناوغل بايث  
ارعش نوعي بي موي لك يفو  
دي دج رصق رعشلا ىلع ىنببيو  
برد لك يف رعشلاب نوريسي  
دي رف دازم موي لك يفو  
رصم عوج نم لتاقن اولاعت  
دي صقلا ولح سانلا ىلع يققلنو  
بعش مالآ حفاصن اولاعت  
دي زم نم له نزلاب خرصنو  
ضراً عمد نم ركسنل اولاعت  
دي عسل نامزلا اهي ف لاتغنو

رصم مالحاً مطحن اولاعت  
 دي لول احابصل اهي فنفدنو  
 مأمعدي ف رجاتن اولاعت  
 دي هشل اتافر عي بن اولاعت  
 لى لكث نرح نم رخسنل اولاعت  
 ديرش بابش اهي ت حار لى ع  
 رمع راهزأ قرحنل اولاعت  
 دي دج ملح دقري رهزل ايفف  
 اعطال قوس رصم ايفف اولاعت  
 دي زملا اهي فو انحبر اهنمو  
 يراوجل رطعب عي بن اولاعت  
 دي عقل ساى و راغصل عومد  
 اربص رصم لى ع لقلنل اولاعت  
 دي بت اموم ه اهي ف سرغنو  
 ادي دج ارعش بت كنل ايهو  
 دي في ائيش رمع لى ف داع امف  
 اصي خر لى حضأ حرجل اذلهآو  
 دي هزرع سب امدل اعابت  
 رمع لالشأ عجاضم ل تحتو  
 دي هشل اماد ي كبت ساكلا يفو  
 ي ناوغل رودص قوف نوح ي صي  
 ي لول دهع رعش ل اب نو دي عي

*English translation:*

Asleep on their mistresses' chests, they profane the age  
of Al-Walid.

The dust of our age collects beneath the bed, mingles with a  
mother's sadness and a martyr's memory.

Blood-dregs stain the cup.

The ruins of perfume and the breath of young girls hover in the  
air.

The merchants toss the young with soiled rags and slave-bread,  
they sell poetry and build a new palace.

On all their routes, with all their victims, they use poetry.

Every day is its own auction.

With the hunger of all of Egypt, I am called to fight by giving peo-  
ple poetry.

Let me face and hold their pain.

Let me ask, Is there more of this?

*Shall we drink the tears of the earth and burn the roses of good  
times?*

*Shall we smash Egypt's dreams and bury the newborn morning?  
Maybe hawk the martyr's bones, laugh at a mother who has lost  
her son?*

*Let's pawn her very tears, discern the homelessness of the youth  
in the wandering lines of her palm.*

*One of their dreams lies gutted beneath roses, but there are more  
in the market.*

*We have profited much off Egypt's open hand, and there is more  
to make.*

*With the perfume of slaves, we can lull the young to tears, and  
keep the crippled crippled.*

*We'll entreat them to have patience, like one tending to a garden  
where we planted disillusionment.*

The low-down know: when the wound becomes cheap, so does  
blood.

We know dregs darken the cup.

We know dust collects beneath the bed.

We know when there is nothing of value left, we write new  
poems.